

NSC BRIEFING

29 October 1957

BERLIN SITUATION

- I. Since the East German currency conversion on 13 October, the Pankow <sup>Regime</sup> ~~regime~~ (with Soviet backing) has become more aggressive in its attempts to weaken the Western position in Berlin.
- A. The East Germans have attempted in a number of ways to hamper West German access to the city.
1. They have increased controls over interzonal trains, including detention of freight and mail cars (79 since 16 October) and confiscation of shipments.
  2. Unnecessary checking of truck cargoes and private automobiles at zonal borders started on 22 October, causing delays of up to 12 hours.
  3. On 17 October, they stopped all autobahn traffic from West Germany to Berlin except that of Three Powers for the day.
  4. Stringent controls (document checks, body searches) have been imposed on Berlin intersector traffic, in violation of Four-Power agreements.
  5. Persons living in East Berlin but working in West sector have been threatened with loss of housing, schooling, etc.
- B. Last weekend a plan to seal intersector borders was reportedly rejected by the East German Central Committee because they feared it would disrupt interzonal trade which is important to East German economy.

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C. Soviets have contributed to tension by sporadic harassment of Allied military trains and highway convoys and demands for new documentation procedures.

1. On 25 October, Russian colonel told American train commander he would take car off train, or send train back to Berlin "if he felt like it," as he was "complete boss and could do what he wanted."